

SIN 101



There are two main CATEGORIES of sins:

1. **Sins of *commission***
(Doing something I should not have done)
2. **Sins of *omission***
(NOT doing something I should have done)

Today, sins of commission are usually the only sins people think of. But sins of omission can be just as spiritually dangerous and deadly. As Catholics, we need to remember that BOTH kinds of sins should be avoided and brought with us to Confession.

We are reminded of these two categories of sin every time we pray the Confiteor (Penitential Act – Form A) during Mass: “I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned in my thoughts and in my words, *in what I have done* and *in what I have failed to do*...”

A lot of times we think sins of commission are the only real sins we commit, but sins of *omission* can be just as bad if not worse. As Catholics, we should make sure to bring *both* kinds of sins with us to Confession.

There are also two main KINDS of sins:

1. **Mortal** (**BIG** sins)
2. **Venial** (*small* sins)

For a sin to be mortal, it must meet the following 3 conditions:

1. **The act must involve “grave matter”** (it must be *seriously bad*)
2. **The act must be committed with “full knowledge”** (you completely *know* that what you are going to do is seriously bad)
3. **The sin must be committed with “deliberate consent”** (you *freely choose* to do something that is seriously bad)

If these three conditions are met, then the sin is mortal and the life of grace is "killed" in your soul. If these conditions are not met, then the sin is venial and it "wounds" us. In all cases, you can never sin “on accident”.

While *all* sins are bad, mortal sins are **deadly** to us. A person who dies with mortal sin cannot go to Heaven (unless they were honestly sorry and were planning to go to Confession as soon as possible).

A person who has committed a mortal sin should NOT receive Holy Communion until going to Confession first. While Catholics are required to go to Mass every weekend, we are NOT required to receive the Eucharist every weekend. A person who has committed a mortal sin can either stay in his pew during communion or go up and cross his arms to receive a blessing. In either case, this person should ask God to receive “spiritual communion” that day since he is not able to receive Jesus physically in the Eucharist.

Side note: Unfortunately, many Catholics today are either not aware of the above teachings or don't really think it's a big deal to receive Holy Communion after committing a mortal sin.

While it is almost impossible to come up with a complete list of mortal sins, here are some, in no particular order, that should be confessed if/when all 3 conditions for a mortal sin are met:

- Murder
- Blasphemy (speaking in a bad way about God)
- Idolatry (worshipping false gods)
- Adultery
- Abortion
- Rape
- Illegal drug use
- Intentionally getting drunk
- Defiant disobedience of your parents
- Meaningless destruction on another's property
- Terrorism
- Pre-Marital Sex
- Stealing
- Abuse
- Serious lies
- Extreme bad-mouthing of others / extreme gossip
- Missing Mass on Sunday or a Holy Day
- Hatred of others
- Etc.

***Remember:** There is nothing we can do to make God stop loving us and no sin so big that God can't forgive it. If I were to commit every sin on this list a thousand times over, God would still love me and still forgive me if I truly repented. Isn't that awesome!?!

Confession is a beautiful thing. Go often!